

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARRI, SP

SUBJ: BASE NEGOTIATIONS

1. DURING ROUTINE REVIEW AT MFA OF VARIOUS BILATERAL ISSUES, POL COUNSELOR ASKED MARQUES DE PERINAT, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS, FOR HIS IMPRESSIONS OF FEBRUARY SESSION OF BASE NEGOTIATIONS IN MADRID.

2. PERINAT REPLIED THAT THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE PROGRESS, THAT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE WITH VERY LITTLE TIME TO DO IT. HE NOTED THAT SPANISH NEGOTIATORS HAD BEEN CAREFULLY PREPARED BEFOREHAND TO TABLE COMPLETE STATEMENT OF SPAIN'S REQUIREMENTS FOR NEXT AGREEMENT IN PRESUMED ABSENCE OF SECURITY GUARANTEE. BUT AT LAST MINUTE BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS, FOREIGN MINISTER GAVE INSTRUCTION THAT THIS STATEMENT OF POSITION BE WITHHELD AND THAT OPPORTUNITY BE GIVEN INSTEAD TO US SIDE TO PRESENT ITS ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS ON DEFENSE COOPERATION.

3. PERINAT CONSIDERED IT LIKELY, SINCE US DEFENSE COOPERATION PROPOSALS DO NOT GO FAR ENOUGH TO REALLY CHANGE ANYTHING, THAT SPANISH NEGOTIATING TEAM WILL PRESENT ITS REQUIREMENTS AT NEXT SESSION IN WASHINGTON. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WERE SOME POSITIVE ELEMENTS IN THE US PROPOSALS FOR A COMBINED PLANNING STAFF WHICH INDICATED AT LEAST US GOOD INTENTIONS TO FIND A SATISFACTORY FORMULA. WHILE NOTING THAT THE SPANISH

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MILITARY SHOWED SOME INTEREST IN THEM, HE WAS EMPHATIC THAT THESE

PROPOSALS DID NOT GO NEARLY FAR ENOUGH. HE NOTED THAT WHAT THE US SIDE CAME FORWARD WITH WAS ESSENTIALLY A CONTINUED, DRUESSED-UP VERSION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE, WHICH HAD MOST CONCLUSIVELY NOT SERVED ITS INTENDED PURPOSE.

4. PERINT STRESSED THAT REAL DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH SPAIN WOULD REQUIRE MUCH MORE THAN AN EXERCISE, IN DRAWING UP JOINT PLANS WHICH ARE THEN FILED AWAY AND FORGOTTEN, ADDING THAT US MUST REALIZE THAT ANY FORMULAS WHICH CAN BE SEEN AS MERELY A CONTINUATION OF PAST PRACTICES WILL NOT WORK. IF US CONTINUES TO SAY NO TO SECURITY GUARANTEE AND TO REAL DEFENSE COOPERATION THEN SPAIN WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SEEK REAL CHANGES IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE AGREEMENT. HE COMMENTED THAT THE CURRENT EVOLUTION OF THE US-GREEK DEFENSE RELATIONSHIPS WAS ANALOGOUS IN THAT THE GREEKS HAD RESPONDED TO UN-SATISFACTORY US POLITICAL STANCE BY STARTING TO REDUCE THE US MILITARY PRESENCE TO BARE ESSENTIALS. HE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT NO ONE ON THE SPANISH NEGOTIATING SIDE REALLY CONSIDERS A COMPLETE END TO DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH US AS AN ACCEPTABLE OPTION. IT IS A FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTION AMONG SPANISH NEGOTIATORS THAT DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH US WILL CONTINUE, THOUGH ITS FORMAT AND CONTENT MAY CHANGE SUBSTANTIALLY DEPENDING ON US RESPONSIVENESS. PERINAT REITERATED ON TWO OR MORE OCCASIONS THAT THESE WERE HIS PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE STATUS OF THE TALKS AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS A FORMAL GOS POSITION. EATON

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